

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE ADVISORY PANEL
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: March 14, 2019

Meeting #14

Project: Lexington Market

Phase: Schematic

Location: 400 W Lexington, Baltimore MD 21201

CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:

Jon Constable, Development Manager with Seawall Development, introduced the project team and goals for the redevelopment of Lexington Market, a continuously operating public market since 1782 and currently managed by Baltimore Public Markets Corporation.

Nicole Pandolfo, Project Architect with BCT Architects, presented the project parameters, existing site context and proposed concept design which includes demolition of the East Market Arcade and replacement with a new urban plaza as well as construction of a new approx. 58,650 SF South Market building on the existing surface parking lot. The market is to remain operational in the existing East Market during the construction period with the building repurposed after vendors relocate to the new building.

Zolna Russell, Landscape Architect with Fluora Teeter Landscape Architects, presented the landscape design proposal identifying various seating areas, public art opportunities, loading and streetscape treatments. A proposed continuous ramp winding through a garden-type area mitigates the nearly 13' slope east to west. Key urban design features include strengthening the urban edges along Paca and Eutaw Streets and visual realignment of West Lexington Street through the site via the variety of open spaces organized along a central axis at the Plaza.

Paul Evenson, Senior Associate with BCT Architects, presented the schematic design proposal for the building massing and architectural articulation, which includes a 'shed' structure inspired by the market's vernacular form and historic appearance and executed in brick, steel, wood and concrete. Market stalls span from east to west of the market along a traditional central axis with a large communal stair mitigating the change of levels. Prepared food vendors are concentrated along the periphery of the market with fresh food vendors located in the central open space of the market. Event space is located on the second floor above the Eutaw Street entrance with loading and services along the south side of building. Market entries are located at the East and West side of the building as well as the Plaza to the North.

DISCUSSION:

The panel applauded the proposed design's thoughtful approach with respect to the market's history, operational challenges and existing site constraints and discussed the following areas for further development:

Site:

- Plaza – The Panel complemented the overall organization of the site, the introduction of a central Event Space and a quieter Garden Ramp area in the main Plaza but recommended that the design team reconsiders the nature of the two smaller public spaces at the east and west end in order to better define the use and intent of those spaces. A reference was made to the undefined open space surrounding the Metro station across the street and how it erodes the urban edge and the public experience.
- Public Art - The Panel also found the addition of large vertical elements at the edge of the street to be inappropriate in scale, proportion and location to the concept of the public market. They suggested that potential art interventions not be limited to vertical sculptural objects but remain open to potential water feature and other experiential and interactive elements.
- Kiosk – The Panel expressed concern over the proposed kiosk being located on axis of the Lexington Street view corridor and questioned its significance spatially and in terms of proposed use. The Panel recommended that it be reimagined elsewhere or removed from the overall composition.
- Market North Terrace – The Panel appreciated the careful zoning of the various areas of the Plaza but questioned the stepped terrace condition in the area outside the north edge of the building in its inability to truly connect the Market to the Plaza and allow for more direct cross-programming of the outdoor space.

Building:

- Massing - The Panel appreciated the contemporary iteration of the market shed building form in reference to the historic past of Lexington Market and encouraged its continued development using contemporary material articulation and detailing. Other suggestions included refining the roof form/slope and potentially extending the roof overhand further towards the open space.
- Spatial Organization – The Panel complemented the quality of the open volume and clarity of the continuous circulation as well as the centrally located atrium/stair space and requisite support spaces. A central point of discussion was the concentration of prepared food vendors along the north side of the building resulting in minimal connection to the Plaza beyond. The Panel recommended that the layout allows for the east and west entries to anchor the central circulation while substituting the single formal north entry with multiple smaller points of direct visual and/or physical access between the Market and the Plaza.

- Exterior Articulation – The Panel generally found the exterior articulation of the building successful and recommended that the design team continues to refine the proposed clean, contemporary language, while staying away from decorative structure at the entries. Other suggestions included minimizing the look of the HVAC well on the roof by locating them as far away from the street edge as possible and executing them in a less obtrusive color/material. The panel also recommended that some of the screening walls on the loading side be less solid and more trellis-like and not borrow materials from the main form of the building as to maintain clarity between the primary form and auxiliary elements across the site.

Next Steps:

This project will advance to Design Development addressing the comments above.

Attending:

Jon Constable and Katie Marshall – Seawall Development

Nicole Pandolf, Chris Holler, Paul Evenson, Christian Heusschen, and Jonathan Cartwright – BCT Architects

Zolna Russell and Matt Ellingson – Floura Teeter Landscape Architects

Kristen Mitchell – MCMA

Will Dorfman and Tom Kurek – DPoB

Melody Simmons - BBJ

Mr. Anthony, Mses. O'Donnell and Ilieva* - UDAAP Panel

Christina Hartsfield, Reni Lawal, Alice Huang, and Matthew DeSantis - Planning